

South Dakota National Guard

Public Affairs Office

Phone: 605-737-6721 Email: ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil Web: sd.ng.mil



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

June 28, 2017

SD National Guard concludes training exercise with Native American Cultural Day

RAPID CITY, S.D. – The South Dakota National Guard concluded its annual Golden Coyote training exercise with a Native American Cultural Day on Camp Rapid, June 15.

The event gave hundreds of service members from 14 states and two foreign nations attending the two-week training exercise the opportunity to see a variety of exhibits and demonstrations on Native American culture.

“This idea was formed through the SD Army Diversity Council with the goal of reaching out to our local community and organizations in order to bridge the gap between varying cultures in the SD National Guard,” said Capt. Carstin Jerzak, SDNG equality, diversity and inclusion manager. “The council chose to focus on the Native American culture based on lots of curiosity and interest from units attending Golden Coyote in the past.”

Units attending Golden Coyote conduct military operations, train on their equipment and employ tactics, and complete various humanitarian missions and engineer projects that help improve the forest and infrastructure of many communities. One annual project includes military transportation assets loading, transporting and unloading timber to Native American communities.

“We’ve been delivering timber to various reservations throughout South Dakota for years now,” said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Bill White, a member of the SD Army Diversity Council.

White said mission requirements limit the opportunity service members have to meet with the Lakota people and learning about their culture and customs.

“Events like this can introduce the culture to the service members - build bridges and close gaps – and that’s this event’s mission,” said White.

The White Eagle Drum and Dance Society presented a pow wow, living exhibit, demonstrating and displaying components of a pow wow, traditional dances, and attire.

Exhibits included the Code Talker Congressional Medallions and tribal flags that included the list of veterans who served as code talkers during WWI or WWII, a display on the use and importance of the buffalo to Native American’s, an authentic teepee and several artifacts or replicas representing cultural and/or traditional life as a Plains Indian.

Service members and their families were able to sample traditional Native American food such as buffalo stew, fry bread and wojapi and make a dream catcher or a God’s eye, items significant to the Native American culture and their spiritual walk.

-more-

“I hope we all gain greater appreciation for Native American heritage and we see where our cultures have similarities verse differences,” Jerzak said. “Hopefully this creates opportunities to get to know someone we may not have had the opportunity to in the past or at other events.”

-30-

High-resolution photos are available at www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard



170615-Z-NM086-0053: The South Dakota National Guard concludes its annual Golden Coyote training exercise with a Native American Cultural Day in Rapid City, S.D., June 15, 2017. The event gave hundreds of service members from 14 states and two foreign nations attending the two-week exercise the opportunity to see a variety of exhibits and demonstrations on Native American culture. (U.S. Army courtesy photo)



170615-Z-NM086-0120: Two children look at a Crazy Horse exhibit as the South Dakota National Guard concludes its annual Golden Coyote training exercise with a Native American Cultural Day in Rapid City, S.D., June 15, 2017. The event gave service members from 14 states and two foreign nations attending the two-week exercise the opportunity to see a variety of exhibits and demonstrations on Native American culture. (U.S. Army courtesy photo)



170615-Z-NM086-0171: The White Eagle Drum and Dance Society demonstrates a pow wow as the South Dakota National Guard concludes its annual Golden Coyote training exercise with a Native American Cultural Day in Rapid City, S.D., June 15, 2017. The event gave service members from 14 states and two foreign nations attending the two-week exercise the opportunity to see a variety of exhibits and demonstrations on Native American culture. (U.S. Army courtesy photo)



170615-Z-NM086-0171: The White Eagle Drum and Dance Society presents a mini-powwow living exhibit as the South Dakota National Guard concludes its annual Golden Coyote training exercise with a Native American Cultural Day in Rapid City, S.D., June 15, 2017. The event gave service members from 14 states and two foreign nations attending the two-week exercise the opportunity to see a variety of exhibits and demonstrations on Native American culture. (U.S. Army courtesy photo)

FOR MORE INFORMATION: Contact the SDNG Public Affairs Office at 737-6721 or e-mail ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil